

Mayor Scott Avedisian today announced the start of the 2009 annual Neighbors Helping Neighbors holiday food program. The Department of Human Services is seeking the assistance of the Warwick community to help needy families this holiday season by making donations to “Neighbors Helping Neighbors.”

With a troubled economy, high statewide unemployment, state budget cuts and rising fuel, food and utilities costs, it's expected that more requests for assistance will be made than ever before. Last year alone, the program provided over 2,000 baskets and gift certificates for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Again this year, due to the high number of requests, residents will be eligible to receive assistance for one holiday only, either Thanksgiving or Christmas.

“The Neighbors Helping Neighbors program always reinforces to me and our staff that we live in a very compassionate city,” Avedisian said. “Even when people are struggling or have their own worries, the people of Warwick always find a way to help others. It's that generosity of spirit and community that has made this program successful year after year. ‘Thank you’ doesn't seem adequate to express our gratitude to all those who help to make the holidays a little brighter for those in need.”

If you would like to make a donation to “Neighbors Helping Neighbors”: Monetary donations should be made payable to “Neighbors Helping Neighbors” and sent to Roberta Steinle, Warwick Human Services Department, 3027 West Shore Road, Warwick, RI 02886. Non-perishable food items may be dropped off at: Pilgrim Senior Center, 27 Pilgrim Parkway or Buttonwoods Community Center, 3027 West Shore Road.

Residents who are in need of a basket are asked to apply in person at the City of Warwick Human Services Department, Buttonwoods Community Center, 3027 West Shore Road, Warwick, RI. You must show proof of residency and proof of income. Please note: the deadline to apply for either holiday is Monday, November 2, 2009.